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CALFED Bay-Delta Program

Gilbert Ramos
6766 Harrington Ave.
Arbuckle, CA 95912

August 7, 2000

Mr. Steve Ritchie, Acting Director
CALFED Bay/Delta Program
1416 Ninth Street, Suite 1155
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Mr. Ritchie:

I farm 600 acres of almonds in southern Colusa County. My family has farmed this land for three generations and I am trying to keep it going for a fourth generation.

The irrigation water we use from Lake Shasta, via the Tehama Colusa Canal, saved our farm from dust bowl conditions in the 1970's. The ground water in this area had dropped so deep we were starting to pump salt water and was very limited. We know how precious water is for everybody in this state. Without water we can not stay in business.

In order to meet its environmental goals, Cal-Fed must move forward to develop new water storage. Farms do not need additional water. But, we recognize the need to make sure there is enough available to meet environmental goals, especially in dry years. The only way to guarantee adequate water supplies during droughts is to capture more water during wet years. Otherwise, water will be taken away from farms in order to sustain environmental and urban uses.

I and other farmers need more time to look through the document and provide comments on the final Cal-Fed EIS/EIR released July 21. I would also urge Cal-Fed to hold hearings to explain to the public what you will do and its effect on us. Many changes were made to the report, which the public needs to have an opportunity to understand and discuss at hearings.

Many farmers will gladly enhance the wildlife value of their farms, and many already do. We take seriously our role as stewards of the environment and wish to act as partners in restoration activities. But farmers will resist mandates or regulations that tell them what to grow and how to grow it. Cal-Fed must work with farmers in a cooperative spirit.

Sincerely,


Gilbert Ramos

cc: Governor Davis, Senator Dianne Feinstein, Senator Barbara Boxer, Congressman Doug Ose, State Senator Maurice Johannessen, and Colusa County Board of Supervisors.

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